

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Noggarth Cross and Widdup Cross,

In the quiet township of Rogerham, nestled amidst the dreary wilds, two crosses held a special place in the hearts of the locals. The first, known as Noggarth Cross, stood by the roadside near Rogerham Gate. Legends whispered that it had been erected by benevolent monks, marking the spot where the old road diverged towards the moors. It served as a sacred shrine, where weary travelers would kneel and offer prayers for safe journeys through the desolate lands.

Over time, Noggarth Cross had been moved from its original position, but the socket in which it once stood remained untouched. Mr. Henry Jobling, the estate agent of Mr. Parker, had recently taken charge of restoring the cross to its rightful place. Recognizing its historical significance, he issued strict orders for its re-erection on the hallowed ground where it had long stood, guiding and comforting those who ventured into the wilderness.

The second cross, known as Widdup Cross, had its perch on the north side of the Roman road at Widdup Head. Positioned on the highest point of the Pennine Range, it overlooked the majestic Widdup Valley. Widdup Cross, a modest slab of mill grit, rose to a height of about six feet, firmly embedded in a square socket measuring 14 or 15 inches. The shepherd who tended to the sheep on the moors had once gazed upon its stately presence, standing tall for countless centuries.

However, the passage of time had not been kind to Widdup Cross. In recent years, the ancient monument had vanished from its elevated position. Alas, the weight of progress seemed to have fallen upon it, as a vandal's hand, driven by indifference, had likely shattered the once-proud cross. Its fragments had perhaps been callously seized for road repairs, a fate that befell many historic relics in the face of practicality.

The disappearance of Widdup Cross cast a shadow of sorrow upon the hearts of the township's inhabitants. They mourned the loss of yet another precious landmark, a silent witness to the trials and triumphs of their ancestors. The villagers believed that these crosses connected them to a shared past, a tapestry woven by the threads of history.

News of the cross's destruction reached the ears of Mr. Parker, a local landowner with a deep appreciation for heritage. Stirred by a mix of indignation and determination, he called upon the community to join him in a mission to restore Widdup Cross. Together, they would honor the memory of their forebears and preserve the tangible remnants of their story.

Driven by a sense of duty and fueled by a collective passion, the people of Rogerham rallied behind Mr. Parker's noble cause. They scoured the surrounding areas, searching for any remnants of the shattered cross. With unwavering resolve, they pieced together fragments, bit by bit, like a giant jigsaw puzzle resurrecting the past.

Days turned into weeks, and weeks into months, but their dedication never wavered. Inspired by their commitment, stonemasons and artisans lent their expertise, diligently recreating the intricate details that once adorned the cross. Each stroke of their tools infused life into the once-broken pieces, carrying the legacy of Widdup Cross into a new era.

Finally, the day arrived when Widdup Cross stood once again on its lofty perch at Widdup Head.

The villagers gathered around, their faces illuminated with a mixture of triumph and reverence. They beheld the restored cross, a testament to their unwavering spirit and their refusal to let history crumble beneath the weight of progress.

Noggarth Cross and Widdup Cross, united in their resilience, became more than mere monuments.

By Donald Jay